

servicing children, the elderly, veterans, and others who need help. In the past year alone, fraternal members invested 91 million hours in community service and contributed \$400 million to charitable programs. In the State of Wisconsin, there are 252,232 fraternal members, and in the last year, these members spent over 4 million hours volunteering and donated over \$25 million throughout the state.

Fraternal benefit societies are tax-exempt organizations that sell financial products such as life insurance and annuities, and use the profits to meet community needs. From a small Federal investment of \$50 million a year, over \$400 million is put back directly into communities. A recent study found that fraternal benefit societies contribute more than \$3 billion annually to society. The fraternal benefit societies leverage additional community resources through fund matching programs and by bringing people together to do good. These community needs would not be met without fraternal benefit societies, especially at this time of shrinking federal, state and local resources.

From acting as a first-response network in the face of natural disasters, to building homes for families in need, to assisting families struggling with overwhelming medical bills, to providing scholarships to deserving students, fraternal members are dedicated to improving the lives of their members, families, and communities.

Many of these societies have been around for over a century. They began, in large part to meet needs of immigrant populations that could not otherwise be met—helping families when a breadwinner got sick or died; helping a community member find a place to stay or meet medical needs. While the organizations have evolved, today they still meet needs that are otherwise not met. They help pay for medical bills, have scholarship funds, assist in neighborhood playground builds, clean up after disasters, stock food pantries and bring meals to seniors.

I want to honor these groups during their annual meeting. I want to take the opportunity to thank the 9 million fraternal members for all of the great work they do around the country.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL ALLEN E. TACKETT

• Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to MG Allen E. Tackett, a great West Virginian who shepherded an evolutionary change in the role of the West Virginia National Guard during his 15-year tenure as adjutant general.

Across our Nation, the Guard mission has been synonymous with being the first on the scene for disaster relief and keeping the peace at home—that mis-

sion remains true today. However, since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the members of the National Guard have pulled double duty, becoming the essential soldiers in our military missions overseas.

This new role for the Guard often means long and frequent deployments away from home, disruption to civilian careers, and new readiness challenges for the Guard's leadership. For global peacekeeping missions in Bosnia, Kosovo, and for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Guard leadership has to ensure their troops have the right equipment at the right time, the proper training for uncommon dangers, and as needed, be the glue that mends and holds together the families of Guard members. Under General Tackett's leadership, the West Virginia National Guard has received all this and more. With tenacious grace, the General asked for—and received—new training facilities, planes, new runways, and congressional backing for family support programs.

Under General Tackett's leadership, the readiness of the West Virginia National Guard skyrocketed to the best in the Nation.

Under General Tackett's leadership, the soldier, especially the new and uninitiated, took center stage. General Tackett believes a soldier's success depends on higher education, the best training, and personal initiative.

Under General Tackett's guidance, future leaders of the West Virginia National Guard have a head start because of his dogged support for the National Guard Youth Challenge Program, the Guard's Tuition Assistance Program, and the technical skills program known as Helmets to Hard Hats.

And, under General Tackett's leadership and vision, our Nation's Guard and Reserve components, Active-Duty servicemembers, and our first responders use state-of-the-art training resources at the Memorial Tunnel and Camp Dawson to prepare defenses in response to 21st century national security threats.

Like other Golden Gloves champions, General Tackett struck his own path in his youth; he honed his individual athletic skills and refined the meaning of a disciplined work ethic. His pride in his home State of West Virginia kept him giving back to the Mountaineer State with years of civilian successes while rising in the ranks of the Special Forces.

His stellar leadership as Adjutant General for the West Virginia National Guard began on September 11, 1995, under Governor Gaston Caperton. I would like to recall a list of his accomplishments in order to recognize the contributions of MG Allen E. Tackett.

Upon his retirement on January 31, 2011, MG Allen E. Tackett remains the longest serving Adjutant General in the history of the State of West Virginia and the United States.

As Adjutant General of the West Virginia National Guard, General Tackett

commanded more than 6,000 soldiers and airmen, including more than 10,000 West Virginia National Guard, soldiers, and airmen that have deployed since September 11, 2001 in support of the global war on terrorism.

General Tackett directed the West Virginia National Guard in response to more than 80 emergencies in the State of West Virginia.

General Tackett has served five Governors of the State of West Virginia, representing both political parties.

The West Virginia National Guard, under the leadership of General Tackett, rose from the rank of 24th in the United States in readiness to first in an 18-month period, has continued to demonstrate its superior level of readiness as judged by the Army readiness criteria, and has remained at or near the top rank in readiness for 15 years.

Under the leadership of General Tackett, the West Virginia National Guard undertook a significant modernization program to ensure that modern facilities are constructed to meet the demands placed upon soldiers and airmen in the 21st century, including projects to replace outdated armories, build new hangars, acquire ramp space to protect the 130th Airlift Wing from the base realignment and closure process, and to convert the Martinsburg Air National Guard base for a fleet of C-5s.

Under the leadership of General Tackett, the Joint Interagency Training and Education Center was built to provide homeland security training to Department of Defense assets, other Federal agencies, and first responders at Camp Dawson and the Memorial Tunnel. As a result, he was described in a 2001 U.S. News & World Report article as someone who could soon be "the nation's defacto chief of anti-terror preparedness."

Under the leadership of General Tackett, the West Virginia National Guard maintained 36 armories and was present in 34 communities.

Under the leadership of General Tackett, the West Virginia National Guard has had a significant positive economic impact across the State of West Virginia, including the addition of nearly 1,500 full-time jobs.

Under the leadership of Major General Tackett, the West Virginia National Guard sponsored and operated the Mountaineer Challenge Academy, which provides at-risk youth with an opportunity to earn a general education diploma.

And, under the leadership of Major General Tackett, 43 percent of the members of the West Virginia National Guard have earned a degree from an institution of higher education or are enrolled in an institution of higher education and participate in the State of West Virginia tuition assistance program.

As his one-time commander, I am proud to share with the American people General Tackett's distinguished and exemplary career, to take this opportunity to publicly thank him, and

to wish him continued success and future happiness in his well-deserved retirement.●

VERMONT'S JUNIOR IRON CHEF COMPETITION

● Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, today I wish to honor the students who participated in Vermont's fourth annual Junior Iron Chef Competition. Forty Vermont middle schools and 16 Vermont high schools sent teams to the day-long event, a cooking competition which promotes local agriculture and healthy choices in school nutrition. I was very impressed, when I attended the competition, to see the creativity and energy the students brought to this endeavor.

Vermont's Junior Iron Chef Competition brings aspiring chefs together for a timed "cook-off." Middle schools face off in one division and high schools in another. Each team is composed of up to five students and is accompanied by an adult supervisor who is allowed to offer guidance but not take part in the actual cooking.

Contestants must use their culinary skills to create original school lunch dishes using at least five ingredients produced by local farmers. Prizes were awarded in three categories. I would like to recognize the winners from each category and commend the students from all competing schools for their excellent effort. Teams from Twin Valley swept the Best in Show prizes; Team Murdock winning at the middle school level and Hakuna Matata for high school. The Barre City Chefs of Barre City Elementary Middle School won the award for Most Creative Dish for middle schools and the Food Fighters from Centerpoint School won in the high school category. The awards for Greatest Number and Best Use of Local Ingredients went to the Barretown Bobcats of Barre Town Middle School and the Rebel Chefs from South Burlington High School.

In addition to extending education beyond the traditional classroom, I admire the competition for promoting local agriculture and healthy eating choices. Junior Iron Chef attempts to change the often stale homogeneity of school lunches by bolstering what is now a statewide effort, led by groups like Vermont Food Education Every Day, FEED, and the Burlington School Food Project. It attempts, successfully, to reconnect young Vermonters with our state's agricultural roots and to restore a bond between our schools and the food that Vermont produces.

Vermont is, I believe, among the leaders in promoting small scale agriculture. While Vermont has long been known for its dairy farms, smaller scale agriculture is growing rapidly in our State.

Scientific studies have shown that the health of Americans is threatened by an overdependence on fast food, on sugar-enhanced drinks, on snacks low in nutrition and high in fats. Too often

we, adults and children alike, turn to processed fast foods instead of eating nutritionally balanced meals. Our national diet is, unfortunately, responsible for many unhealthy results, including a surge in both childhood obesity and childhood diabetes. Creative efforts like Vermont's Junior Iron Chef Competition are terribly important in the effort to effectively combat unhealthy diets and the rise of childhood obesity and childhood diabetes.

To the Junior Iron Chef Competition sponsors, Vermont's agriculture community and its forward thinking school systems, to those who organized the event, to the adult supervisors, and especially to the Vermont students who participated in the Junior Iron Chef Competition, let me offer my congratulations.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:04 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 362. An act to redesignate the Federal building and United States Courthouse located at 200 East Wall Street in Midland, Texas, as the "George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush United States Courthouse and George Mahon Federal Building".

H.R. 1423. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 115 4th Avenue Southwest in Ardmore, Oklahoma, as the "Specialist Micheal E. Phillips Post Office".

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 362. An act to redesignate the Federal building and United States Courthouse located at 200 East Wall Street in Midland, Texas, as the "George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush United States Courthouse and George Mahon Federal Building"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 1423. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 115 4th Avenue Southwest in Ardmore, Oklahoma, as the "Specialist Micheal E. Phillips Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 867. A bill to fight criminal gangs; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BURR, Mr. COBURN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. JOHANNIS, and Mr. KYL):

S. 868. A bill to restore the longstanding partnership between the States and the Federal Government in managing the Medicaid program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GRAHAM:

S. 869. A bill to provide for an exchange of land between the Department of Homeland Security and the South Carolina State Ports Authority; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. TESTER:

S. 870. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to modify oil and hazardous substance liability, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. COBURN (for himself, Mrs.

FEINSTEIN, Mr. WEBB, Mr. BURR, Ms.

COLLINS, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. RISCH):

S. 871. A bill to repeal the Volumetric Ethanol Excise Tax Credit; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 872. A bill to amend the Omnibus Indian Advancement Act to modify the date as of which certain tribal land of the Lytton Rancheria of California is considered to be held in trust and to provide for the conduct of certain activities on the land; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. AKAKA:

S. 873. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide benefits for children with spina bifida of veterans exposed to herbicides while serving in the Armed Forces during the Vietnam era outside Vietnam, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. AKAKA:

S. 874. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify the provision of compensation and pension to surviving spouses of veterans in the months of the deaths of the veterans, to improve housing loan benefits for veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LAUTENBERG:

S. 875. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to require additional monitoring of certain contaminants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. LAUTENBERG:

S. 876. A bill to amend title 23 and 49, United States Code, to modify provisions relating to the length and weight limitations for vehicles operating on Federal-aid highways, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. COATS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. INOUE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. KERRY, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KOHL, Mr. KYL, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr.